

# COLONIAL NEWSLETTER

P.O.Box 4411

Huntsville, Alabama 35802

J.C.Spilman, Editor

---

Volume 15, No. 3

October, 1976

Serial No. 47

---

## THE ENIGMATIC VOCE POPULI HALFPENNY of 1760

● ● Jerry Zelinka; Tulsa, Oklahoma

I.	WAS THE VOCE POPULI HALFPENNY A LEGITIMATE EARLY AMERICAN COIN?	556
II.	AUCTIONS AND EARLY ACCEPTANCE	557
III.	DESCRIPTIONS OF DIE VARIETIES and a PLATE	558 563
IV.	BORDER DESIGNS	564
V.	BIBLIOGRAPHY	565

It is a pleasure to present in this issue of CNL a new die variety and interlock plate of the VOCE POPULI halfpenny of 1760. The plate and accompanying commentary were prepared by Jerry Zelinka of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

There can be little question that these coins circulated in Early America, yet -- even after more than two hundred years -- the details of their origin remain obscure -- their purpose and maker uncertain -- a true enigma in every sense.

JCS

## ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

● ● ● The Research Forum

Technical Notes

Gleanings ● ● ●

Sequential page 555

# I. WAS THE VOCE POPULI HALFPENNY A LEGITIMATE EARLY AMERICAN COIN?

"I know of no numismatic evidence that these coins were produced for use in Colonial America," Kenneth Bressett, editor of A Guide Book of United States Coins, wrote recently in a letter. "I do suspect that some of them were used here, but probably to no greater extent than other contemporary foreign coppers," he wrote. "I certainly would not quarrel with any collector who felt that they should be included in a collection of Early American coins, whether or not they were originally intended for circulation in the Colonies."

The VOCE POPULI have been included in the Guide Book since its first edition in 1946. They were not listed in Wayte Raymond's Standard Catalog of United States Coins until 1954, after Walter Breen revised the colonial section.

S.S.Crosby in 1875 did not recognize this issue in his Early Coins of America. They are listed in Robert Vlack's Early American Coins (1965). He wrote that he assumed many of the VOCE POPULI passed as currency in the United States.

The VOCE POPULI are included in the colonial section of Scott's 1976 Comprehensive Catalogue and Encyclopedia of United States Coins. This reference admits no knowledge that VOCE POPULI actually circulated in America.

Dowle and Finn's The Guide Book to the Coinage of Ireland (1969) lists the VOCE POPULI halfpenny with types and prices. The authors write that many of this issue, like other Irish coins and tokens, found their way to the United States. It is not explained further.

Of this enigmatic coinage, its known origin is restricted to one sentence: the dies were manufactured by a Roche of King Street in Dublin, button manufacturer for the Irish army. The purpose of the coins is still obscure. There is speculation as to whom different busts represent, but no real proof has been shown. A letter "P" in the field of some types has not yet been satisfactorily explained. Some say it means "provost."

The two Farthing varieties of the VOCE POPULI coinage are omitted from this discussion. They are already well documented in the literature and it did not seem necessary to include them in this discussion of the many halfpenny varieties.

## II. AUCTIONS AND EARLY ACCEPTANCE

As far back as 1871 examples of this coinage have appeared in auction catalogs. In the Charles Clay auction of December 5-7, 1871, Lots 229-231 were VOCE POPULI with a description that read: "These coins are interesting to American collectors because they had their origin in that popular agitation that culminated in the Revolution."

In 1876 George Leavitt and Company conducted an auction of the Loren G. Parmelee Collection. VOCE POPULI were listed in the catalog under a section "American Colonial, State Coins, Tokens" (Lot No. 1538).

Again in 1882 in S.H. & H. Chapman's sale of the Charles Bushnell Collection, VOCE POPULI were included. They were described as "Coppers circulated in Pennsylvania -- Known as 'Bungtowns.' "

Catalogers H.P. Smith and David Proskey listed two VOCE POPULI pieces in the January 2-24, 1890 auction of the R.C. Davis Collection, conducted by the New York Coin and Stamp Company. Here, under Lot No. 2416, their description reads: "Pennsylvania (Various Bungtowns and Tokens)."

In later sales Henry Chapman included VOCE POPULI pieces in the United States Colonial section when the Matthew Stickney auction was held in June, 1907 (Lot No. 350) and again in the George Earle Jr. Collection sale in June, 1912 (Lot No. 1984).

The Jenks Collection catalog of December, 1921, organized by Henry Chapman, listed a VOCE POPULI piece on page 519 as: "Pennsylvania -- nondescript or counterfeit halfpenny which circulated in this Colony and sometimes called 'Bungtowns.' "

These quotations lead toward the conclusion that the VOCE POPULI coinage was directly associated in the minds of early American dealers and collectors with the even more enigmatic terms "Bungtowns" and "Pennsylvania Coppers," both of which were used at that period of time (the mid-1800's) to define what are generally known today as "evasion halfpence" -- those coppers with improper legends or devices made in similitude of Regal British halfpence. What association there may be between the VOCE POPULI and these "evasion halfpence" and their apparent importation into America during the mid-nineteenth century is yet another question that remains to be resolved through research.

### III. DESCRIPTION OF DIE VARIETIES, AND A PLATE

Philip Nelson in 1905 published illustrations of 12 known varieties of the VOCE POPULI halfpenny in his book The Coinage of Ireland in Copper, Tin and Pewter. Most of the descriptive material that follows is derived from that work and reinforced by personal observation of the specimens. The last four varieties (Nelson 13, 14, 15 and 16) have been identified by Robert Vlack in recent years and were allotted additional "Nelson numbers."


Nelson's plates were extremely difficult to use. The numerals on his plates differed from those assigned to his descriptions and this has resulted in considerable confusion over the years. More useful plates were published by Spink & Son in 1969 in Dowle and Finn's Guidebook to the Coinage of Ireland. However, their plate failed to cross reference their attribution system to that of Nelson nor was there any indication of the considerable interlocking of dies in this series.

On the new plate presented herein - on page 563 - we have arranged the presently known 12 obverses and 11 reverses in a format permitting easy visualization of the die interlocking within this series and, at the same time, a method for cross referencing the Nelson and Dowle & Finn attribution systems. Nelson numbers are shown on the ligatures within a circle; Dowle & Finn numbers are shown directly below each circle. In addition we have elected to assign a number to each obverse and a letter designation to each reverse. These are positioned directly below each illustration. All specimens illustrated are from the collection of the author.

The die variety descriptions in the following table are arranged in a format which provides - on the top line - a general description of the specimen, specifically whether it has the J760 or 1760 date element on the reverse, and a word description of the obverse bust plus a notation of the Nelson attribution number and the Doyle & Finn numbers for cross reference purposes. This is followed by a description of the key elements of each obverse and reverse die. Then, in conclusion, a general comment regarding, usually, Nelson's treatment of the variety, plus the estimated number of specimens believed to exist today. These estimates are based on studies originally made by Robert Vlack. The descriptions are not intended to be all inclusive for purposes of attribution. Attribution of specimens should be made by reference to the plate.

The assignment of die variety designators has been made in accordance with the method originally established for the Early American coinages by Sylvester S. Crosby. That is -- numerals for obverses and letters for reverses. Assigned designators for the "Square Head" varieties range from 1-A to 8-F and for the "Long Head" varieties from 13-K through 16-O. This leaves unassigned obverse designators 9 through 12 and reverse designators G through J available for use with future varieties that may be discovered.

## ● ● DESCRIPTIONS OF DIE VARIETIES ● ●

- 1-A J760 BOYISH HEAD Nelson 1 D & F 565**
- Obverse 1 VOCE  POPULI**  
 Laureated bust right. Bust similar to that shown on farthing of this series. Border Type 5
- Reverse A HIBER N IA ++ J760**  
 Two annulets on harp; eight strings. Border Type 5
- Nelson wrote that this variety was unpublished before 1905. Authors Dowle & Finn (1969) wrote that this design may be a pattern. Largest planchet of series.
- Estimated number extant: 13-30
- 2-A J760 OLDER HEAD Nelson 4 D & F 566**
- Obverse 2 VOCE + POPULI**  
 Laureated bust right. Letters often show metal residue at edges. Design sharply struck. Border Type 5
- Reverse A** See previous description.
- Nelson wrote that "a variety has points on each side of HIBERNIA instead of the two crosses."
- Estimated number extant: Over 1,250
- 3-A J760 SHARP-FEATURED BUST, LONG NOSE Nelson 15 D & F (None)**
- Obverse 3 VOCE x POPULI**  
 Laureated bust right. Die break connects flatly struck laureate with rim at top. Border Type 1
- Reverse A** See previous description
- This variety was unknown to Nelson.
- Estimated number extant: 76-200
- 3-C 1760 SHARP-FEATURED BUST, LONG NOSE Nelson 8 D & F 572**
- Obverse 3** See previous description
- Reverse C HIBER N IA ++ 1760**  
 Large "H" punched over smaller "H". Flower and dot on harp; eight strings. Border Type 2
- Occurs both struck and cast. Brass counterfeit (contemporary) offered in March 1975 Dr. Spence sale.
- Estimated number extant: 13-30

4-A J760 SQUARE HEAD, FLATLY STRUCK Nelson 5 D & F (None)

Obverse 4 VOCE + POPULI

Laureated bust right. Curls and laureate flatly struck.

Rough execution.

Border Type 1

Reverse A See previous description

Estimated number extant: 2-3

4-B 1760 SQUARE HEAD, FLATLY STRUCK Nelson 2 D & F 570

Obverse 4 See previous description.

Reverse B •HIBE R NIA• 1760

Flower and annulet on harp; seven strings. Only reverse with vertical harp strings. Often confused with "1700" error variety Reverse D(a) when in worn condition.

Lower end of staff missing.

Border Type 1

Estimated number extant: 201-500

5-C 1760 SQUARE HEAD, FLATLY STRUCK Nelson 16 D & F (None)

Obverse 5 • VOCE POPULI

Laureated bust right. Head mostly indistinct. Rough execution. Letters crude, misaligned. Double-punched "V".

Border Type 1

Reverse C See previous description.

This variety was unknown to Nelson.

Estimated number extant: 2-3

5-D 1760 SQUARE HEAD, FLATLY STRUCK Nelson 6 D & F 567 (1760)  
5-D(a) Obverse 5 See previous description. D & F 568 (1700)

Reverse D •HIBE R NIA• 1760

Harp markings indistinct; eight strings. Die break extends from elbow to rim at right.

Border Type 1

Nelson knew of only cast examples and stated "it is rare."

Estimated number extant: 31-75

Reverse D(a)

The same die as Reverse D. A few specimens were apparently struck while the date element was incomplete and read "1700." The date element was later completed to read "1760". This die-sinkers error was unknown to Nelson.

- 6-C 1760 SQUARE BOLD HEAD, FULLY STRUCK** Nelson 9 D & F 571
- Obverse 6** VOCE + POPULI  
Laureated bust right. Clash marks of letters often seen at "VOCE". Border Type 1
- Reverse C** See previous description
- Both struck and cast specimens exist.
- Estimated number extant: Over 1,250
- 
- 7-E 1760 SHARP-FEATURED HEAD** Nelson 3 D & F 573 (VOCE)  
D & F 574 (VOOE)
- Obverse 7** VOOE POPULI  
Laureated bust right. "VOOE" is a result of die break closing "C". Laureate and curls flatly struck. Border Type 5
- Reverse E** • HIBE R NIA • 1760  
Annulet and dot on harp; eight strings. Border Type 5
- Nelson wrote "proofs exist of this coin, which is neatly executed, and usually struck, but also sometimes cast." A brass contemporary counterfeit was offered in a 1971 coin dealer's catalog.
- Estimated number extant: 201-500
- 
- 8-F 1760 SQUARE HEAD** Nelson 7 D & F 569
- Obverse 8** • VOCE POPULI  
Laureated bust right. Double-punched "V". Letters mis-aligned. Border Type 1
- Reverse F** HIBE R NIA ++ 1760  
Two annulets on harp; nine strings. Late die state shows incusation on reverse from clashed dies. Some specimens show die crack from sprig in hand through "R". Border Type 1
- Estimated number extant: 4-12

- 
- 13-K J760 LONG-HEADED BUST** Nelson 10 D & F 575
- Obverse 13** VOCE POPULI  
Laureated bust right. Roughly struck. Dot near "L". Border Type 2
- Reverse K** HIBE R NIA • • J760  
Two annulets on harp; six strings.  
Letters "H" and "I" double-punched. Border Type 2
- Nelson wrote "this type is apparently unpublished" (prior to 1905).
- Estimated number extant: 31-75

- 14-L J760 LONG-HEADED BUST** Nelson 11 D & F 577
- Obverse 14** • VOCE • POPULI  
Laureated bust right. Double-punched "P" under bust. Several letters of legend show slight evidence of double-punching. Border Type 2
- Reverse L** HIBER N IA • • J760  
Two annulets on harp; six strings. Several letters of legend show slight evidence of double-punching. "O" in date is double-punched. Border Type 2
- Rough execution.
- Estimated number extant: 201-500
- 14-M J760 LONG-HEADED BUST** Nelson 13 D & F (None)
- Obverse 14** See previous description.
- Reverse M** HIB ER N IA • • J760  
Letter "R" and second rosette double-punched. Two annulets on harp; six strings. Some specimens show two die breaks curving from top center down through date. Lower end of staff doubled. Border Type 2
- This variety was unknown to Nelson.
- Estimated number extant: 501-1,250
- 15-N J760 LONG-HEADED BUST** Nelson 12 D & F 576
- Obverse 15** VOCE • POPULI  
Laureated bust right. Nearly same portrait as Obverse 14. "P" adjacent to tip of nose. Border Type 3
- Reverse N** HIBER N IA • • J760  
Two annulets on harp; six strings. Border Type 3
- Rough execution.
- Estimated number extant: 501-1,250
- 16-O J760 PECULIAR LONG-HEADED BUST** Nelson 14 D & F (None)
- Obverse 16** • VOCE POPULI  
Laureated bust right. Curls and eye softly struck. Letter "P" below bust. The "harelip". Border Type 4
- Reverse O** HIBER N IA • • J760  
Crude semi-reclining figure and large rosettes flatly struck. Markings on harp indistinct; six strings. Border Type 4
- Nelson knew of this variety and plated it in his 1905 reference; however, he did not formally list it with the other twelve varieties.
- Estimated number extant: 4-12



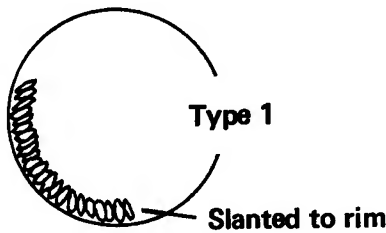




IV. BORDER DESIGNS

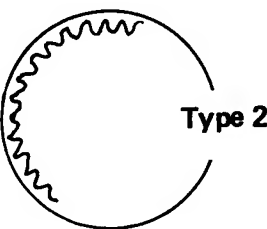
On Obverses

On Reverses



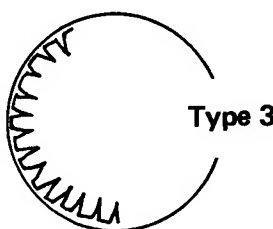
3, 4, 5, 6, & 8

A, B, D & F



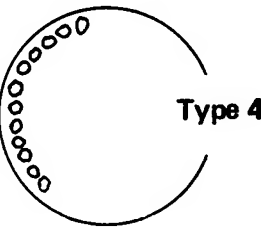
13 & 14

C, K, L & M



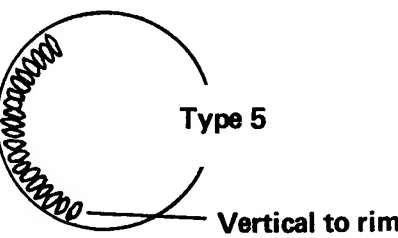
15

N



16

O



1, 2 & 7

E

Edges are plain, no lettering or other devices are known.  
Weights range from 102 to 136 grains (as reported by Nelson).

## V. BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Coinage of Ireland in Copper, Tin and Pewter, Philip Nelson, 1905.

Early American Coins, Robert A. Vlack, 1965.

A Guide Book of United States Coins, 28th Ed., R.S. Yeoman, 1975.

British Commonwealth Coins, 3rd Ed., Remick and James, 1971.

Scott's Comprehensive Catalogue and Encyclopedia of United States Coins, 2nd Ed., Don Taxay, 1975.

The Guide Book to the Coinage of Ireland, from 995 A.D. to the Present Day, Dowle and Finn, 1969.

Seaby's Coins and Tokens of Ireland, 1970.

"The Colonial Coins Prior to July 4, 1776", The Numismatist, H. Chapman, February 1948 (Originally published March, 1916)

"On the Existence of Dowle and Finn 573", The Numismatic Circular, J. Horan, Ph.D., April 1976.

"The Hibernia - Voce Populi Coinage of 1760", The Colonial Newsletter, Ken Bressett, October 1960.



# ● Letters ●

● Technical Notes ●

● The Research Forum ●

● Gleanings ●

New Jersey CENTER DOTS

(TN-56A)

● ● from Walter H. Breen; Berkeley, California

Of course Jersey coppers show center dots, (CNL p 539) and you are absolutely right about why they were used. But then, so do some Vermont, many Connecticut, a few Massachusetts, and many Philadelphia Mint coppers.

The degree of care or carelessness of an individual diesinker in failing to efface a center dot is not much of a clue as to his identity. Letter punches are far more reliable, as I tried to point out in my "Legal and Illegal Connecticut Mints" (Studies on Money in Early America, pp. 105-133, especially pp. 107-111 (the Morristown mint); pp. 111-113 (Atlee at Rahway & NYC), pp. 113-118 (Machin's Mills); -- and intermittently throughout.

New Jersey CENTER DOTS -- Another! Reverse n.

(TN-56B)

● ● from Richard Picker; Albertson, New York

On the New Jersey center dots I have been able to confirm reverses v, T, J and L. I have also found another -- reverse n -- during the several hours spent in my bank vault checking on these reverses; this is definite as I verified it on two reverses of 56-n and two reverses of 58-n.

Question - what is reverse gg ? A new reverse or a typo?

Answer - Reverse gg is now known as reverse ii. See CNL p. 513 where in Editor's Note 21 the confusion surrounding the gg designation is discussed under varieties 82 and 83-ii. JCS

New Jersey CENTER DOTS --

(TN-56C)

● ● from T.D.Howe; Houston, Texas

My 48-g is a superb coin and does show a dot one millimeter below the chief but on the left edge of the center pale. A thin die crack extends from this dot 45° down to the right across the center and adjacent pale. The dot does not appear to be centered.

I can also confirm the dot on the reverse of 66-v, but NOT on reverses G-L-D-P-k-n-f-dd. The dd is sharp and if there was ever a center dot it should be evident. On the others the absence of a center dot could be due to circulation.

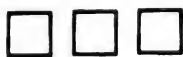
Some Observations and Speculations on ST. PATRICK Halfpence & Farthings  
 ●● from John J. Horan, PhD; State College, Pennsylvania (TN-61)

Some of the early articles on the St. Patrick issues in CNL prompt me to make the following observations and speculations --- the St. Patrick farthings are commonly considered quasi-colonials because the 1682 New Jersey statute refers to the halfpenny alone. This distinction troubles me.

In the first place, are we not simply assuming that the smaller sized coin was intended by the minter to be a farthing? In fact, the farthing tokens issued under royal license in the reigns of James I (circa 1613-1625) and Charles I (circa 1625-1644) contemporaneous with the St. Patrick series in Ireland are of much lighter weight and smaller size. So too were the merchant tokens of that era and the later Armstrong's coinage of Charles II in 1660. Perhaps the smaller sized coin was intended to be a halfpenny, and the larger one a penny.

Secondly, even if we assume that the smaller St. Patrick coin was intended to be a farthing, were not European coppers often upvalued in this country during various periods? Witness the relationship between the Woods Hibernia and Rosa Americana series. The former, originally made for Ireland but rejected there because of irregular weights, were double the size of their American counterparts.

I suspect that the New Jersey statute in fact confirms legal tender status on what we now call the St. Patrick farthing. Both denominations probably circulated here, but the larger sized coins may have been too few in number to warrant special mention in the legislation.



Connecticut MOS Specimens (TN-62)  
 ●● from John D. Wright; St. Joseph, Michigan

The Connecticut MOS specimen shown on the cover of the January 1976 issue (CNL, p. 514) is the most obviously intentional construct I've seen of this series. Before that piece, the one illustrated at the right had been sufficient to convince me of intent. From the number of spectacular examples published in CNL it certainly would appear that the question of intent has been settled past any reasonable doubt.

16.2-NN.1 of 1787 MOS Type A  
 with 90° rotated reverse. Double struck.



MORE  
LETTERS



EXTANT VERMONT COINAGE DIES -- ? --

(TN-63)

from Sanborn Partridge; Proctor, Vermont

Herewith a tale of something that would have been numismatically glorious had it panned out!

Thumbing now thru Earle Newton's "THE VERMONT STORY", published by the Vermont Historical Society in 1949, I was electrified to read the following caption over a drawing at page 88 of two men working away in a mint: "An independent coinage, minted at Rupert in 1785 by Reuben Harman (who also cut the Vermont seal for Ira Allen in 1779), was one of several acts of sovereignty by the independent republic of Vermont. Harmon's dies and money scales are in the Vermont Historical Society Museum." (Underlining supplied by me).

What a pregnant notion! How significant and determinative for Vermont numismatists!

I flew to the phone and energized the present Acting Director (Mr. Wesley Cate) to investigate this suggestion of his predecessor, for Earle Newton was Director back in 1949 (but has gone on, I believe, to be the Director at Sturbridge Village, Massachusetts).

Alas, the report comes back that 'tain't quite so ... to my severe disappointment.

Accession lists and physical inspection disclose as follows:

- (A) The dies at the Vermont Historical Society are some provided by the United States to Vermont for 1797 revenue stamp purposes ... 16 steel dies and 1 brass die. They are thought to be the only extant ones of those provided to the various states for 1797, and so unique enough. But they clearly do not pertain to Reuben Harmon's Vermont coppers of 1785-1788.
- (B) The money scales at the Vermont Historical Society are those used by Samuel Mattocks, the second Treasurer of Vermont, successor to Ira Allen, who was the first. (Interestingly, Lots #561 and #562 of the recent 29 April 1975 Pine Tree Auction in NYC pictures fiscal paper signed by "S. Mattocks" at his Tinmouth, Vermont, Treasurer's Office in March and May 1787).

Ah, well! So it goes: As in other lines of endeavor, there are ups and downs in numismatic investigations.

## RESEARCH EFFORTS on H.N.RUST

(RF-21H)

● ● from Eric P. Newman; St. Louis, Missouri

The newspaper clipping THE FIRST CENT submitted by John Sallay (CNL, p. 549) and the editorial comments are sensationally interesting. Are you organizing any search for the date and source or is anyone else?

The City Directory for Frisco might help. The Army records might help. The type style in the newspaper might be recognized immediately by a California historian. Rust had to be extremely well known to the public as "Major" even though he was probably retired. His Army career probably took him all over the United States as CNL excerpts show.

The sixth Fugio die is probably the Mattatuck Historical Society die. (CNL, p. 242, Fig. A) The article seems to show there were not parts of a die (as in the American Journal of Numismatics account) but full dies. And -- where is a copy of the slip that Rust gave with each restrike?

## Editor's Note:

Ye Editor hopes that Mr. Newman's enthusiasm will prove contagious to some of our West Coast Patrons. There are a half-dozen or so of our Patrons who have expressed a continuing interest in H.N. Rust and these new clues provided by John Sallay's clipping indicate several new avenues for investigation. Unfortunately - the time consuming tasks associated with the publication of CNL effectively preclude any active participation by ye Editor in such searches. So - it is up to our Patrons to follow-up on Mr. Newman's suggestions and to share their findings through the pages of CNL.

## MORE on H.N.RUST Research

(RF-21I)

● ● from Walter H. Breen; Berkeley, California

Major Horatio N. Rust spoke, in that historic newspaper clipping, (CNL, p. 549) of "a New Haven coin collector" who told him about the Broome & Platt firm. This may account for the early claims that C. Wyllys Betts "found" the New Haven dies, if Betts (then at Yale) is the collector Rust was alluding to. However, I suspect that the story is quite other than the way Rust described it, because of the workmanship of these dies. In particular, I suspect that Rust had the dies made in Waterbury, at Scovill's, three pairs in all, one used for silver (and gold?), another for the copper and brass impressions, and that the rest of the story is a screen.

(See also RF-21, "Who was H.N. Rust?", CNL December 1968 pp 36-44; sequential pages 234-236 & 237-242; JCS)

## GLEANINGS ● ● ●

(G-2)

An ILLUSTRATION of a RHODE ISLAND SHIP TOKEN in a 1785 Japanese Book.

● ● submitted by Alfred D. Hoch; Somerville, Mass.

from Seiyō Sempu (Illustrated catalog of European Coins) by Shoen Shujin.  
Woodblock print. Illustrated 8vo. wrs. 42 p. Oriental style case with  
bone clasps. Kyoto, ca. 1785. (Japanese text)



GLEANINGS is a new Feature Series of The Colonial Newsletter. Over the years many very short articles & notices related to numismatic activity have appeared in journals, newspapers and other publications -- some of them quite obscure. The purpose of GLEANINGS is to bring these to the attention of our Patrons and to elicit whatever comments you may care to submit. The comments will be published in future issues.



On the ECKFELDT PROCESS at the First U.S. Mint

(G-1B)

●● from Walter H. Breen; Berkeley, California

The report on the Eckfeldt process on die hardening is excellent and fills in a gap which few people suspected to exist. For one thing, it accounts for the near disappearance of a problem which was very common with colonial dies and with Philadelphia Mint dies of 1793-94. This is the early die failure which looks like a central bulge on the coin but results from central caving-in, where the die face was insufficiently hardened and the core still worse. Familiar examples on Philadelphia Mint coppers known as cents include 1793 obverse of S-6 and reverses K and L of the Liberty Caps, and the reverses of 1794 S-22, 23, 24, 33, 40, 48 and NC6 with various obverses. Half cent reverses of 1794 and half dollar reverses of 1794-95 show varying degrees of the same problem. But it is almost never found on dies of 1796 and later, which ties in neatly with the introduction of the Eckfeldt process.

However, we cannot attribute it to either Albion Cox or John Harper, and the reason is that Jersey coppers from all the known mints (except Wyon's at Birmingham) include dies which had this same weakness in varying degrees. The roster includes the following, among others:

Rahway -- Maris obverses 9, 10, 11, 22, 23 , 19;

straight beams 14, 13; 1787 straight beams 32, 29;

1787 curved beams 47 , 47, 42.

Reverses include G, H, gg, hh and w.

This proves that Albion Cox did not develop it.

Goadsby -- 49.

Ogden -- J (in 37-J), X

Ogden & Rindell at Elizabethtown -- K, b, W, V and 35

Morristown -- obverses 63 (Dudley), 59, 64, 65 (Mould); reverses r, o, u

Bailey -- bb, cc

Machin's Mills -- 69

Now no matter at which mint John Harper worked, clearly he could not have developed the process either, or we would find a number of dies (probably late in the output of that mint) in which this problem did not develop. Yet the above enumeration proves that the problem recurred in both early and late dies. We can therefore dismiss the idea at once that either Cox or Harper knew or used the process in making dies for Jersey coppers. At Philadelphia it is another story: Albion Cox was surely too busy with his duties as Assayer to be of much help with Adam Eckfeldt in making die blanks; John Harper was not regularly employed by the mint, though he did sell the establishment some ironmongery from his saw factory a few blocks away. So presumably it was Eckfeldt's own invention.

It is unlikely that the guess of William Kneass for "Mr. K" can be bettered; casual visitors seldom got such a close look at mint operations, and this one goes far beyond George Escol Sellers' account (in American Machinist).

